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These pages were omitted from DRS contribution to
NIE-29/2: TO ESTIMATE THE POSSIBILITY OF AN INVASION OF YUGOSLAVIA
PRIOR TO MID-1952, October 18, 1951.

State Dept. declassification & release instructions on file

Review of this document by CIA has
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- ☐ CIA has no objection to declass
- ☐ It contains information of CIA
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- ☐ It contains nothing of CIA interest

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15(a)

(4) Local and Regional Problems:

Macedonia: Historically, one of the most vulnerable areas in Yugoslavia is Macedonia, focal point for the manipulation of local antagonisms. The Tito regime has shown itself to be acutely aware of this vulnerability and has taken political, economic, and cultural steps to lessen it. In the past two years Belgrade has indicated increasing confidence in its ability to successfully combat Cominform intrigues as shown by the absence of special security measures in Macedonia and Belgrade's anti-Bulgarian propaganda campaign.

At the same time, however, Moscow does possess certain potentialities which it presumably hopes to exploit in Macedonia. These include (1) continued existence of local petty antagonisms; (2) the presence of elements desiring either an independent Macedonia or one more closely tied to Bulgaria; and (3) persistent economic problems. These possibilities have been enhanced, at least theoretically, by the current attitude of the peasants towards the Tito regime.

In the flush of the first indigenous nationalist government in centuries, Macedonia more than any of the other republics has moved further and more forcefully towards the establishment of Communist methods of production. This is especially true with regard to the creation of agricultural cooperatives. The federal government has supported and encouraged this trend in the hope of winning the loyalty of Macedonian nationalists by assisting their economic progress. In creating a large socialist agricultural sector Belgrade has established a group of young Communist officials dependent upon

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15 (b)

the continuation of the system. This group may now be wary of the effects of the current trend towards liberalization will have on their personal power. They cannot be expected to view with equanimity such measures as the announcement made in late September that 50 percent of the members of the Peoples' Committees in Croatia and Serbia were being dismissed in the interest of greater efficiency.

The temporary shelving of the touchy Aegean Macedonian issue does not seem to have worked against the Tito regime despite the fact that Cominform propaganda has characterized Tito as the betrayer of the legitimate rights of the Macedonian people because of his alleged indifference to the fate of Greek Macedonians now under "monarcho-fascist" rule. Apparently, the lengthy program of assurance undertaken by the Macedonian Communist Party for several months prior to the closing of the Greek-Yugoslav border on August 2, 1949 has been effective. The creation of the Society for Aegean Macedonian Refugees, while ostensibly for social welfare purposes such as housing and employment, has political implications for the Yugoslav Macedonians in that it indicates that the Yugoslavs are not insensitive to the present plight and future disposition of Aegean Macedonians.

Recent reports from Macedonia indicate continuing efforts by the Cominform to win over the people to its cause, particularly members of the Macedonian Communist Party. These efforts have apparently included (1) dropping leaflets from aircraft; (2) sending barges loaded with propaganda leaflets across the border at Strumica; and (3) lately an attempt to revive the IMRO organization in Greek and Yugoslav Macedonia. This is in addition to the incessant anti-

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Yugoslav propaganda emanating from Radio Sofia and the Free Greek Radio.

So far all evidence points to the conclusion that Bulgarian propaganda efforts have not been successful. The recent attention devoted to the re-activation of IMRO under Communist auspices seems to be a tacit admission of the failure of these efforts. In a recent interview with US Embassy officials a local Macedonian Cabinet member said that the Cominform had actually succeeded in reviving the old terrorist organization in northern Greece, but only on a limited scale. He added, however, that the situation would bear watching because the IMRO tradition was still strong in the mountains and that under clever leadership a revival of IMRO could conceivably occur. Cominform efforts to re-activate the IMRO have soft-pedaled the Communist and Bulgarian sponsorship and instead emphasized Macedonian nationalist aspirations and Yugoslavia's alleged betrayal of the Macedonian cause.

Macedonia continues to be plagued by economic problems, none of which, however, are any different from those affecting other areas in Yugoslavia. A major disappointment, according to one Macedonian official, was the notable lag in the planned rate of industrialization. Although he readily admitted that this could be laid directly to the Cominform, still he indicated the resultant situation was irritating. Housing is a problem and is complicated by the flow of Albanian and Bulgarian refugees as well as the presence in Skopje and other cities of groups of Aegean Macedonians. Macedonian cities are not large enough to accommodate the increased

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urban population caused by even the limited industrialization.

Peasant resistance to the regime seems on the upswing with the government in several cases being forced to call out the militia to quell riotous peasants. The severe taxes and enforced collections of grain are not popular with the peasants who still own their own land.

The Albanian and Turkish Moslems are apparently not happy with the CPY's decree abolishing the veil for women and polygamy as a religious practice. There is obvious discontent in Macedonia as in other areas but at the moment it does not appear to be of such proportions as to seriously threaten the Tito regime.

Montenegro: Montenegro represents another area peculiarly susceptible to Cominform pressure. Historically and culturally oriented towards Russia, it has shown itself still open to Russian influence. Some of the most prominent Cominform defectors have been Montenegrins, including Max Goranovic and Voja Srzentic. The Montenegrin terrain is suited to guerrilla warfare and for the infiltration of agents from Albania. One of the main complaints heard in Belgrade and Zagreb is that the Montenegrins are running the central government. Some Slovene and Croat Communists resent the attention given backward areas like Montenegro instead of their own more industrially-advanced areas. Montenegrin mentality peculiarly lends itself to police activities and to the traditional Balkan-type espionage activity. There are some who believe that the predominance of Montenegrins in the secret police (UDBa) and the security troops (KNOJ) actually represents a serious threat to the security of the regime.

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Another factor which the Cominform could conceivably play upon is the traditional resentment of primitive peoples to government controls. Belgrade has catered to Montenegrin economic and cultural sensibilities but not at the expense of relying on them entirely. Yugoslav Army units from other areas of the country are stationed in Montenegro and any attempted uprising would be faced with the prospect of immediate armed retaliation.

The Yugoslav Government is acutely aware of these political weaknesses and is constantly employing measures, including harassment by the secret police, to keep them in check. Short of armed intervention in the country, there appears no reason to believe that the stability of the Tito regime will be affected by either one or all.

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